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mind in its maturity, and in the "fulness of times," under classical influence expressed itself in the finest form.

Dr. Hunt's claim of a high ethical character for Chaucer will, perhaps, be rejected by some. Arnold deposes him from his literary position for his alleged want of seriousness. Lounsbury, in his "Studies in Chaucer," presents his views in the following abstracts: "The evidence indicates that Chaucer's mind passed through several phases, but that towards the end doubt and denial became its leading characteristics." He concedes that "the evidence is scanty" but insists that "it is equally fair to say that it cannot be expected to be otherwise than scanty." Lounsbury finds in Chaucer "an audaciousness in his reference to the Supreme Being," shocking to the devout, and "a familiarity of tone coming perilously near to the verge of blasphemy." Yet he recognizes the fact "that he was profoundly interested in the questions connected with doctrinal theology. The problems which still disquiet the intellect, and after the solution of which we grope in vain in the soul's own darkness, were the ones that were perpetually present to his mind." This seems like a concession to an ethical element in Chaucer.

Dr. Hunt has effectively shown that in each of the eras reviewed in the two parts into which his work is divided,

"a distinctive and an ever-increasing Christian element is visible; so prominent, at times, as to control the current speech, and never so in abeyance as to be without decided potency. So manifest, indeed, is this to the discerning student of our oldest literature that it is not unhistorical to say that Old English, taken as a whole, is more biblical and ethical in its tone than it is secular, and might be assigned, as to much of it, to the alcoves of theology and morals, of ecclesiastical history and pastoral theology."

Dr. Hunt's work thus becomes a valuable contribution to the philosophy of English literature. He has shown in the ethical teachings of the earliest period the influence of the agencies in the formation of the established bias and spirit of the English mind, and the essential characteristic of English literature, which has made it "the most thoughtful, the most vigorous, and the most vitalizing literature of the modern world."

He refers this characteristic not to the "soil, sea, sky, and climate" of England, to which Taine so largely refers it, but, recognizing these material conditions as predisposing influences, he refers the ethical character to the providential and historic tuition of its formative period. This serves as a strong justification of the attention given to the earlier literature in English studies. The student drinks at the fountain head from the source of the power and dignity of our great literature.

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ENGLISH GRAMMAR.

Studier over engelske Kasus. I Række. Med en Indledning: Fremskridt i Sproget. Af OTTO JESPERSEN, Copenhagen: Kleins Forlag, 1891. Pp. 222.

DR. JESPERSEN'S first series of studies of the English case is one of the most careful pieces of work in this direction yet produced in Danish. The author has collected a vast amount of material from the earliest to the latest period of the language, showing an intimate knowledge of our tongue that is very rare in a foreigner. His first independent work was an English grammar, published in 1885, since which time he has brought out a number of monographs on various linguistic subjects. Valuable as the treatment of the English case is, however, the chief interest of the work undoubtedly centers in the introduction, "Progress in Language," which forms more than a quarter of the whole, and in which the author attempts to prove the grammatical superiority of modern English over Old English, of analytical languages over synthetic, of root languages over inflectional. In connection with this theory, or, perhaps, as a logical consequence of it, he undertakes also to overthrow the theory that the inflectional, agglutinative and root families of languages represent three stages of development, of which the last is the most primitive.

To take up the first question, the superiority of modern English to old English as a means of communication. While the author is perfectly correct in his statement that speech is the effort to make one's meaning intelligible and that, therefore, "that language stands

highest that accomplishes most with the least means" his enthusiasm for his subject makes him go altogether too far. It is no doubt true that "a result of inflections is irregularities, exceptions," but he seems to forget that the lack of inflection leads to precisely the same trouble. Thus the whole system of concord, which, as Jespersen says, is a necessary accompaniment of inflection, while causing mental effort to the speaker, certainly serves to make the meaning clearer to the hearer. It takes at least two persons to make a conversation, that is, an interchange of ideas, and the claims of the one are quite as urgent as those of the other. To cite one example, which figures in almost every English Rhetoric as a violation of clearness: "And thus the son the fervid sire addres'd." The use of a separate form for nominative and accusative would clear up the ambiguity immediately. The presence of inflectional forms often causes awkwardness, especially in the use of the pronoun, but this is not sufficient to prove the superiority of an analytical to a synthetic language. Dr. Jespersen's Z. E. D. is by no means a necessary conclusion.

In attempting to disprove the theory of the primitiveness of root languages, Dr. Jespersen has recourse to a family of languages whose study is comparatively rare, that of South Africa. In one of these he finds a very complicated system of inflection, in some respects more complicated and consistent than that of any of the Indo-European languages. Especially is this the case with the so-called "representative elements," or prefixes, which are reducible to separate classes, their use being strictly limited by the construction. Particularly interesting is the author's too brief comparison of Bruccotti à Vetralle's grammar of one of these languages written two hundred years ago with Bleek's grammar of the language in its present state, which shows a decided simplification of the forms. Jespersen concludes, furthermore, that it is possible to find in these languages the growth of the pronominal idea and of many other grammatical forms. He concludes, and this is the turning point of the whole argument, that this grammatical development has been effected in every case by a shortening and

simplification, instead of by an expansion. Therefore, if this be the case with a primitive language like the Hottentot or the Zulu, why cannot the same hold good of all other languages? "Simplicity in linguistic formation . . . is, therefore, not original but derived" (p. 41). In support of the statement as regards the Indo-European family, he quotes from Brugmann's treatise on the gender of the noun and Johan Schmidt's 'Die Pluralbildungen der indog. Neutra.' Paul, in his 'Principles of the History of Language,' to whom Jespersen does not refer, does not, however, seem to lend support to any such belief, though no more direct statement than the following can be found in his great work:

"we cannot, of course, suppose that analogy coöperated in this manner in the case of the first creations with which language began. No trace of any grammatical category is seen in them. They answer to entire conceptions. They are primitive sentences of which we may form an idea from such sentences as fire! thieves! spoken in a single word." (P. 184).

Dr. Jespersen is by no means alone in his theory that Chinese may be regarded as representing the last stage in a series of linguistic changes. While J. Edkins in his work 'The Evolution of the Chinese Language' (1888), still clings to the old idea, Lepsius, writing thirty-one years ago, and Ernst Kuhn but nine years ago, come to the directly opposite conclusion, that Chinese has not always been a root language. Jespersen, however, again goes too far when he claims that it would be impossible for a primitive people to employ so logical a system of language as that of the Chinese, in which each word has its fixed position.

Curiously enough, the only misstatement with regard to linguistic forms noticed, concerns the author's own tongue. It is not correct to say that "in the present Danish speech we distinguish the singular and plural of *Dag* only by the presence or absence of the stop tone." I am sure that the most careless speaker would pronounce *Dage* as a dissyllable, although the final *-e* is frequently very indistinct. In the study of the English pronouns, to which this first series is devoted, the author has shown both skill in his choice of selections and care in their reproduction.

Even the varying forms of the Early and Middle English are given with absolute correctness. On page 177, Dr. Jespersen has introduced a very useful phonetic term into Danish, *stemmelse* (voicing), for which his apologetic foot note is hardly necessary. The discussion of the confusion in the use of the nominative and objective is particularly sound and valuable for Danish readers. It is somewhat in the nature of a defence of the position taken by the author in his English grammar, for the schoolmaster is abroad in Denmark as well as in America. Jespersen's treatment of the Scandinavian influence on Old English (p. 97) is remarkably temperate for a Dane. His suggestion that Einkenel's frequently excessive claims for French influence on English syntax may often be disproved by citing similar Danish constructions, is valuable, even though, as he himself admits, such resemblances do not necessarily imply direct Scandinavian influence. Not the least virtue of the work is the admirable table of contents, which almost takes the place of an index. Dr. Jespersen's second series will be looked forward to with interest.

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POETRY AND PHILOSOPHY.

Kuno Fischer und die litterarhistorische Methode. Von HUGO FALKENHEIM, DR. PHIL. Berlin: Speyer & Peters, 1892, pp. 107.

THE object of Falkenheim's monograph, as set forth in the Preface, is to attempt to establish the principles of a method which shall be a guide to a scientific understanding and appreciation of German poetry. Its rather strange title is due to the fact, that the author believes to have discovered these principles in the critical works of Kuno Fischer on Lessing, Schiller and Goethe. The title is not a happy one, as it may arouse the opposition of some critics to whom Kuno Fischer is not a *persona grata*; furthermore, it is misleading. For the value of the essay lies in the principles of literary criticism deduced from Fischer's books, and not in the discussion and analysis of Fischer's methods.

It would be impossible within the limits of a

book review to discuss, or even comment upon, principles of such far-reaching importance, for this would require at least as much space as the author has taken for their exposition. As such a method, however, cannot be limited to German literature, but is universal in its application, it will not be without value to follow the main lines of the views here presented, in the hope that the presentation of these may lead to a careful reading of the book, which is full of suggestions on all matters pertaining to the critical study of literature, though all might not agree with its chief deductions.

The author asserts, as the underlying principle of his method, that poetry and philosophy are intimately connected in their nature. This principle he demonstrates by an analysis of the character of both, and by the fact, that so many German poets have written purely philosophical works, and that all poets have embodied in their poetic creations great philosophic principles, and in their poetry have touched upon all the great problems of human life. Therefore, without the foundation of a knowledge of philosophy, the domains of classical German literature cannot be explored in their full extent; and, if literary criticism rejects philosophic thinking, that is, the philosophic method, it cannot rise to the full appreciation of its problems, and, hence, cannot solve them. The study of the history of literature is a philosophic process; it consists in investigating the principles of the internal development and the organic growth of literature. He who would write a history of literature must combine the qualities of the historian, of the psychologist and of the literary critic pure and simple. Every author must be considered from three standpoints. He must be viewed in relation to his nation; must be assigned his proper place in the history of that nation's literature and civilization. He must be discussed as the man, as a personality. He must be considered as the poet, or rather his works must be judged by themselves as artistic productions, and criticised from the purely literary standpoint. The relative importance of these elements of literary judgment varies, but they all require consideration.

Now, in regard to the first point. No judg-